

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for automated handling of alarms generated by a fault management system associated with a telecommunications network in which each alarm has certain attributes, comprising the steps of:
  - establishing a set of rules for handling each alarm based on certain attributes of that alarm, and storing said set of rules in a database;
  - receiving a particular alarm from the fault management system into a queue;
  - applying the established set of rules to the particular alarm, such that an action is identified for handling the particular alarm; and
  - initiating said action in response to the particular alarm without intervention of an operator.
2. A method as recited in claim 1, in which applying the established set of rules, identifying an action for handling the particular alarm, and initiating said action are accomplished through execution of a digital computer program.
3. A method as recited in claim 1, and further comprising the step of reporting of the initiating of said action to an operator.
4. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein said action is transmission of instructions to a particular network device.
5. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein said action is generation of a trouble ticket.
6. A method for automated handling of alarms generated by a fault management system associated with a telecommunications network in which each alarm has certain attributes, comprising the steps of:
  - establishing a set of rules for handling each alarm based on certain attributes of that alarm, and storing said set of rules in a database;
  - providing access to said database such that contrary instructions can be communicated to and temporarily stored in said database;

receiving a particular alarm from the fault management system into a queue;  
applying the established set of rules to the particular alarm, such that an action is identified for handling the particular alarm; and  
determining whether there is a particular contrary instruction stored in the database, and in the absence of a particular contrary instruction, initiating said action in response to the particular alarm without intervention of an operator.

7. A method as recited in claim 6, in which applying the established set of rules, identifying an action for handling the particular alarm, determining whether there is a particular contrary instruction stored in the database, and initiating said action are accomplished through execution of a digital computer program.

8. A method as recited in claim 6, and further comprising the step of reporting of the initiation of said action to an operator.

9. A method as recited in claim 6, wherein said action is transmission of instructions to a particular network device.

10. A method as recited in claim 6, wherein said action is generation of a trouble ticket.

11. A system for monitoring and controlling operation of a telecommunications network, comprising:

a fault management subsystem for monitoring operation of the telecommunications network and issuing alarms based on the occurrence of predetermined events;

a database for storing rules for handling alarms issued from said fault management subsystem based on certain attributes of such alarms; and

a task manager for implementing actions;

wherein, upon issuance of a particular alarm from said fault management subsystem, the rules stored in said database are applied in order to identify an appropriate action for handling the particular alarm, said task manager implementing the appropriate action without intervention of an operator.

12. A system as recited in claim 11, in which applying the established set of rules, identifying an action for handling the particular alarm, and implementing the appropriate action are accomplished through execution of a digital computer program.

13. A system as recited in claim 11, wherein said appropriate action is transmission of instructions to a particular network device,

14. A system as recited in claim 11, wherein said action is generation of a trouble ticket.

15. A system as recited in claim 11, wherein access is provided to said database such that contrary instructions can be communicated to and temporarily stored in said database; and wherein when the rules stored in said database have been applied in order to identify an appropriate action for handling the particular alarm, a determination is made as to whether there is a particular contrary instruction stored in the database, and if so, said task manager canceling implementation of the appropriate action.

16. A computer-readable medium containing computer-readable instructions which, when executed, perform the steps of:

applying an established set of rules to a particular alarm generated by a fault management system associated with a telecommunications network, such that an action is identified for handling the particular alarm; and

initiating said action in response to the particular alarm without intervention of an operator.